

St. James

PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

St. James Presbyterian
Climate Action
Newsletter

*Called by God
to serve 8 billion people
with a sustainable earth.*

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St. James Presbyterian Climate Action Newsletter

Collected and edited by the Mission and Social Action Committee
For questions and suggestions contact Maureen Kosa or Carla Shafer

"I, the Lord, am its keeper: I water it every moment. So that no one will damage it, I guard it night and day." Isaiah 27:3

BELLINGHAM'S CLIMATE ACTION ISSUES

Meditation 3rd Sunday in Lent – Psalm 19

March 3 2024

By Nancy Gaston

At first glance, we might assume from Psalm 19 that God's creation is downright chatty: "The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims his handiwork," it begins.

Yet as we read on, we find there are no spoken words—only majesty and beauty as evidence of God's glory. However, in scripture, speech does play a powerful role in creation. Genesis tells us repeatedly that "God said," and it came to be. But in the resulting universe, only human beings are gifted with words.

Those same beings—we, ourselves—are then charged with stewardship of the earth. Is it a stretch to suggest that our duties might include using our words on behalf of creation? When we see nature despoiled and species threatened with extinction, our words as well as our actions are needed.

This Lenten season may be calling each of us to speak up or to write on behalf of our fragile planet. It may be to suggest composting as opposed to putting food scraps in methane-producing landfills, or to offer alternatives to single-use plastics that are filling the seas and killing off whole species of God's creatures.

What if we each assumed as a Lenten discipline using our words in defense of creation? To quote Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Nancy Gaston is an ordained Presbyterian elder and a member of First Presbyterian Church, Vancouver, Washington.

To view LENTEN meditations from Presbyterians for Earth Care, go to: <https://presbyearthcare.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Lent-Devotional-2024.pdf>

Environment America – Today's Question: Fashion forward or Fashion Fumble. Continually pumping out cheap clothing to fuel the next trend is incredibly wasteful -- about **30% of the billions of pieces of clothing produced every year will never be sold, and are likely sent to a landfill or incinerator instead.**

Why is the fast fashion industry making tons of cheap clothing that never even reaches our closets? And why are heaps of unsold clothes being sent directly to landfills or incinerators?

Here's all the resources it takes just to produce one cotton t-shirt and one polyester t-shirt:

- For each shirt, another half a shirt worth of material is discarded.
- It takes **157 gallons of water** to make a polyester shirt. A cotton shirt takes **1,019 gallons of water** to grow and process the cotton material.
- The threads for the polyester shirt are made from **1.5 cups of crude oil**. The equipment that processes the cotton shirt burns the fossil fuels equivalent to **nearly a gallon of oil**.
- The cotton threads need about **1/2 cup of fertilizers and pesticides** to grow.
- Making these two shirts produces about **37 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions**.

- If you wash the polyester shirt every two weeks, it will release roughly **1 million microplastic fibers every year.**²

Now imagine that billions of times over. The scale of the fast fashion problem is massive.

You and I might try to do our best to be less wasteful, whether it's choosing to buy fewer new clothes, thrifting second-hand clothes or patching up what's already in our closet. But to solve a problem this large, we need to tackle the root of the problem. Appeal to the industry that finds it profitable to create clothes that won't be sold and just piled up to be burned and rot.

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO: <ACTION@ENVIRONMENTAMERICA.ORG>

What about the trees? Are they product or earth's salvation and our strongest allies? How will we continue to use wood in all the ways we do and have enough forests for survival? Are you part of the equation?

FOREST Act is a landmark bipartisan initiative that would stop agricultural products from illegally deforested lands from entering the US. If enacted, it would require companies to use responsible sourcing and demonstrate that they are taking actions to remove illegality and abuses from their supply chains. It would help to improve laws, monitoring, assistance, and enforcement in countries experiencing illegal deforestation.

FOREST Act has been endorsed by a diverse coalition of environmental, human rights, and faith-based civil society organizations in the United States. And, in early February, nearly 100 faith-based organizations signed a letter to legislators supporting the legislation. Please amplify this message by urging your representative and U.S. senators to co-sponsor the bill. If your representative or senator is already a co-sponsor, you will have the opportunity to thank them.

For more information, go to: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/forest-act>

OREAD by H.D.

Whirl up, sea—
 Whirl your pointed pines,
 Splash your great pines
 on our rocks,
 hurl your green over us,
 cover us with your pools of fir.



Tell Major Automakers: We Electric Vehicles!

People across the country are falling in love with their electric vehicles (just ask the Sierra Club staffers we featured in a [recent blog post](#) about EV love stories). But major car manufacturers are failing to make the transition to electric cars and trucks happen – and every gas-powered car built this year ties us to decades more of oil consumption, vehicle pollution, and respiratory health risks.

Demand Toyota, Ford, and other automakers stop fueling the climate crisis.

SUGGESTED BOOKS, ARTICLES, AND SEMINARS

Reminder: SJPC needs a volunteer church librarian who could order books for SJPC's free library. Also check out the cart of books in the Narthex (upstairs entry way).

**Ray Dellecker, Gretchen Pfueller, Amy Morriss. Claudia Allan, Patricia Harris, Gena Gustafson, Carla Shafer. You are invited to join the MSA Committee in this and other volunteer service and action efforts at St. James PC and beyond. We usually meet on the first Wednesday each month at 4 PM (Live/Hybrid: Horizon room and/or Zoom)
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Further Reading: “Resiliency in the Ashes” by Omar El Akkad.

<https://www.orionmagazine.org/article/santiam-fire-2020-detroit-oregon-resiliency/>

“But the idea of adaptation to the environment rather than control of it is still, for many people, a tough sell. For decades, the default mode of thinking about communities and their surrounding landscape in this part of the world quite often assumed the latter to be subservient to the former. To change that impression—and to do it quickly and dramatically enough to start minimizing the impact of potentially larger climate disasters years down the road—is a sharp departure.”

The article gives voice to the anger, confusion, and trauma we are experiencing from climate change disasters.

JOIN St.James CAN, bring your ideas and concerns to make things better. Contact Maureen Kosa at mkosa@hotmail.com or Carla Shafer at chuckanutsandstone@gmail.com

This space is for you to make your list of action items to check or record in an effort to help form your resolve and when necessary raise questions and seek support.